

**SHAKESPEARE'S MIDSUMMER  
NIGHT'S DREAM: THE SECOND  
QUARTO, 1600: A FAC-SIMILE  
IN PHOTO-LITHOGRAPHY**

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Shakespeare's *Midsummer night's dream: the second quarto, 1600: a fac-simile in photolithography* by William Griggs

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**WILLIAM GRIGGS**

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SHAKESPEARE'S  
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SHAKESPEARE'S  
MIDSUMMER  
NIGHTS' DREAM.

*THE SECOND QUARTO,*

1600:

A FAC-SIMILE IN PHOTO-LITHOGRAPHY,

BY

WILLIAM GRIGGS,

FOR 13 YEARS PHOTO-LITHOGRAPHER TO THE INDIA OFFICE.

WITH INTRODUCTION BY

J. W. EBSWORTH, M.A.,

EDITOR OF "THE 'DROLLERIES' OF THE RESTORATION;" "THE BAGFORD  
BALLADS;" "THE ROXBURGH BALLADS," ETC.



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TO TWO FRIENDS,  
J. O. HALLIWELL-PHILLIPPS, F.S.A., ETC.,  
WHO, MORE THAN ALL OTHER WRITERS,  
HAS ILLUSTRATED THE  
LITERATURE OF  
"A MIDSUMMER NIGHT'S DREAM,"  
AND TO  
SIR NOËL PATON, R.S.A., ETC.,  
WHO, ABOVE ALL OTHER ARTISTS, HAS SHOWN THE FAIRY-LAND  
LOVELINESS OF OBERON AND TITANIA, IN THEIR  
HAUNTED WOOD NEAR ATHENS,  
THIS REPRODUCTION OF THE SECOND QUARTO  
IS, WITH SINCERE ESTEEM  
AND AFFECTION,  
Hedtcath,  
BY  
J. W. EBSWORTH.

[Shakspeare-Quarto Fac-similes, No. 4.]

# INTRODUCTION

TO THE PHOTO-LITHOGRAPH OF

JAMES ROBERTS'S QUARTO EDITION, 1600:

A MIDSUMMER NIGHT'S DREAM.

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## § I. JAMES ROBERTS'S QUARTO UNREGISTERED.

**T**HE three most important versions of the *Midsummer Night's Dream* text are now placed within reach of the student of literature, by means of photo-lithography; which gives, with absolute exactitude, a reproduction of every peculiarity in the typography of the originals. It would not be too much to say that equal facilities for independent and combined examination of these materials were never hitherto attainable, at moderate cost, since the early part of the seventeenth century. Even in 1623, when for twenty shillings a purchaser could claim the newly-issued First Folio of "*Mr. William Shakespeare's Comedies, Histories, and Tragedies: Published according to the True Originall Copies*": London: Printed by Isaac Iaggard and Ed. Blount," the sixpenny editions, each in Quarto, that had been circulated for nearly a quarter of a century, must have



become scarce, and therefore more costly. All these originals had in our day ceased to be accessible, except in some few national or ducal libraries, and could not be bought without a ruinous expenditure of money, before Howard Staunton's excellent photo-lithograph appeared in 1866: more trustworthy, being scientifically reproduced, than the careful typographical reprint of the same First Folio, issued two years earlier, but reduced into a quarto size of page, by Lionel Booth, of 307, Regent Street, 1864. This had been printed by L. Strangeways and H. E. Walden, 28, Castle Street, Leicester Square.<sup>1</sup> The original First Folio, in perfect condition, occasionally sells at between seven hundred and eight hundred guineas (the Baroness Burdett-Coutts paid such a sum for hers); and the Quartos are so rare that they virtually never come into the market at all.

By the help of this present series of *exact reproductions*, students of moderate means, on both sides of the Atlantic, are once more enabled to search for themselves the true text, and to collate the chief authorities, unmisled by the caprices of commentators, or by the deliberate falsifications introduced at various times. There are many persons now desirous of investigating the subject, and capable of valuing the uncorrupted language of the Poet.

As we have done with Fisher's Quarto, so here with that of Roberts: For purposes of reference, it is sufficient that *we number the lines of the Quarto*, in fours, on the inside margin; and also *mark the division of Acts*, which is given in the Folio but not in either Quarto. We add a list of characters, on a separate page, facing the title, for convenience and completeness; but no list was given in any edition before Rowe's, in 1709.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Still later appeared a marvellously cheap reproduction by photo-lithography, reducing each large folio page into an 8vo., necessarily minute in character. It was published in 1876, by Messrs. Chatto and Windus, with an Introduction written by J. O. Halliwell Phillippa. There had been a serviceable imitation of the First Folio, issued of full size (known as "Upcott's Reprint"), about 1807. We need only mention the costly and rare *Ashbee Fac-similes*, which were lithographed from elaborate tracings. They were attainable by few; at five guineas each, and only thirty copies issued. George Steevens had, however, in 1766 issued, in four octavo volumes, *Twenty of the Plays of Shakespeare in Quarto*.

<sup>2</sup> It shows the need of such a reproduction as our own, when we find a scholar (one so generally accurate as the learned Daniel Wilson, Professor of History and English Literature at Toronto) mistakenly declare: "It is, perhaps, due to the

In his Introduction prefixed to the photo-lithograph of Fisher's Quarto, the present writer has attempted to show the probable date of *A Midsummer Night's Dream* to have been not earlier than 1593, or later than 1596. It cannot possibly have been produced later than August, 1598 (judging from the mention of it by Meres); although the entry of Fisher's Quarto in the Registers is not until the 8th of October, 1600.

Of the Quarto now reproduced there is no entry whatever in the same Registers, to more precisely indicate the date than any mere statement of the year, 1600, on Roberts's title-page. We are left entirely to our own resources in the endeavour to ascertain which of the two Quartos was the earlier issued. After careful examination, and judging by internal evidence in the absence of external proof, we venture to affirm our belief that Thomas Fisher's was the earlier produced.<sup>1</sup>

early place which '*A Midsummer Night's Dream*' undoubtedly occupies among the dramatic works of Shakespeare, that in all the older texts it is divided into acts and not into scenes"—(*Calden: A Critique on Shakespeare's Tempest and A Midsummer Night's Dream*. 1873. P. 240.). This he writes after giving a special description of the two Quartos; but the simple fact is, that neither of them shows any division whatever into acts or scenes. The Folio of 1623 first introduced the distinction of the acts in this play, but made no further division into scenes. After all, when we remember how little was done on the early Stage to change the background, except by affixing and removing an explanatory placard, we need not wonder at the deficiency of exact limits to scenes or acts. Like Robert Stephens's innovation of verse-division, in 1551, continued in our English Bibles, the system may be found convenient for easy reference; but it is frequently destructive of some higher charm. It breaks the continuity of subject, and our attention is frittered away on fragmentary passages. A modern audience loses remembrance of the poetry and romance of the drama during each frivolous recurrence to gossip and flirtation, to fill the time between the acts. It would be well if the intervals were less obtrusively marked, both in acting and printing. Here, at least, in our Quartos, the divisions can be found when sought, but are not thrust forcibly on attention.

<sup>1</sup> In this we avowedly run counter to the opinion expressed by so honoured an authority as J. O. Halliwell-Phillips, who writes as follows: "Perhaps Fisher's edition, which, on the whole, seems to be more correct than the other, was printed from a corrected copy of that published by Roberts. It has, indeed, been usually supposed that Fisher's edition was the earliest; but no evidence has been adduced in support of this assertion, and the probabilities are against this view being the correct one. Fisher's edition could not have been published till nearly the end of the year, and, in the absence of direct information to the contrary, it may be supposed that the one printed by Roberts is really the first edition." (*Memoranda on The Midsummer Night's Dream*, privately printed, 1879, p. 34: written 1855.) One ought to feel quietly confident of the strength of argument, and evidence, who holds and tries to establish any opinion adverse to that proclaimed by so experienced

§ 2. THE TWO QUARTOS NOT SIMULTANEOUS, OR BOTH  
INDEPENDENT.

The two Quartos were certainly not issued simultaneously, although near to one another in date, both being of the same year, 1600. They were not both independent, in the sense of being wholly disconnected with each other: the later one being a direct or modified copy of its predecessor. An impression of the earlier Quarto lay before the compositor who set-up the second. Shakespeare himself makes one of his characters, Dogberry, admit that "When two men ride upon a horse, one must needs ride behind." Now it was most unlikely, *a priori*, that the open and unrebuked publisher of the Registered Quarto, Thomas Fisher, should have ridden behind the unlicensed, and probably piratical James Roberts.<sup>1</sup> Be it remembered that after the 8th of October there still remained, according to the "old style" of computation, more than five months for Roberts to publish his book, and yet he entitled to date it as of the year 1600. So any conjectures, based on Fisher's Quarto being unpublished "till nearly the end of the year" affect not the question whether the two Quartos were issued simultaneously. If any person believes that they

are simultaneous, he must be guided by the evidence, and not by a guide. But we have formed our estimate deliberately, and are prepared to abide by the conclusions thus gained. We try to show that "the probabilities" are not against the theory of Fisher holding priority; and also bring forward the evidence attainable "in support of this assertion." As a mere supposition, one is as likely as the other. It really becomes a question of evidence, to be gathered and interpreted from a collation of the Quartos themselves, and in connection with the First Folio edition of 1623.

<sup>1</sup> The name of James Roberts, as the printer, is on the title-page of other unregistered Shakespeare-Quartos, viz., two editions of *The Excellent History of the Merchant of Venice, with the extreme Cruelty of Shylocks the Jew*, etc., printed by J. Roberts, 1600 (L. Heyes, publisher); the earliest Quarto extant of *Titus Andronicus* (E. White, publisher), the same year, 1600; lastly, the second Quarto of *Hamlet*, 1604 (N. Ling, publisher), with another edition of the same in the following year, 1605.

We add these few particulars concerning the printers, gathered from the Registers of the Company of Stationers:—

[Thomas] Fisher. Date of Freedom, 3 June, 1600 (vol. ii. 725). Date of First Registered publication (the Quarto of *Midsummer Night's Dream*), 8 Oct. 1600 (iii. 174).

James Robertes (*sic*). Date of Freedom, 27 June, 1564 (i. 240). Date of First Registered publication (Christopher Payne's *Cristemmas Carolles*, and *The Country Clown Doth much Desyre a gent to be*), 1588 (i. 402).